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1,000 FATHOMS DEEP;

OR,

WITH FRANK READE, JR., IN THE SEA OF GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

THE REPORTER'S STORY.

THE report had gone forth that Frank Reade, Jr., the famous young inventor, whom every one has heard of, had finished his submarine boat.

Newspaper men besieged the great machine shops in Readestown in the endeavour to get a Kodak picture, or at least a description of the new boat.

But Barney and Pomp, the two trusty colleagues of Frank, held the gate valiantly, and baffled all attempts of this sort.

If there was one thing Frank Reade, Jr., disliked it was publicity. It was quite useless to remind him that he had made of himself a public character by drawing the attention of the world to himself, and that it was a debt he owed the people at large to furnish the newspapers with the details of his affairs.

He would not accept this reasoning, though in spite of all his best efforts his fame would increase, and the world would still marvel at the wonderful triumphs which he achieved.

Not satisfied with having mastered the art of flying in the air, he must needs overcome the problem of submarine navigation.

This he had done long since with unqualified success, but his last submarine boat had been lost, as had been described to the reader in a previous story.

So he had constructed a new boat. Of all the army of reporters who besieged the machine works, only one succeeded in getting beyond the gates.

One day a tall, athletic fellow, with shrewd eyes and a sharpness of manner which might have done credit to a Hawkshaw, presented himself carelessly at the gate.

"My card," he said, handing the pasteboard to Pomp, the coloured genius, who was gate-keeper. "Please send it in to Mr. Reade. I will wait here."

Pomp gave the fellow a critical glance. He had met every subterfuge of the reportorial besiegers, but none of them had approached him as yet in this manner. It was so off-hand and clever-like that he really could not take offence.

So he deigned to glance at the name on the card. Thus it read:

"MR. IRVING L. COOLEGE,
"With the American World."

"Humph!" muttered the darky, Then he returned the card with a crusty reply:

"Mistah Reade, sah, is not to be interviewed to-day, sah!"

"Oh, but you are mistaken, sir, I have not asked for an interview," replied the shrewd reporter.

Pomp opened his eyes.

"Yo' wants to git a look at de new boat, sah? Well, I jes' gibs yo' a pint. She am gwine to sail nex' week, an' yo' be here den an' yo' kin see her start, sah!"

"You are quite mistaken," replied Mr. Cooledge, blandly. "My errand concerns Mr. Reade personally, sir, quite personally; in fact, strictly so. You will do me a favour by sending in that card and you will also earn a good cigar."

Coolly the audacious reporter took a cigar from his case and tendered it to Pomp.

Something in the fellow's manner impressed the darky. Up to this moment he had not scrupled to turn away all applicants summarily. But Cooledge's manner was so very persuasive that Pomp felt half inclined to yield.

So he finally said:

"I knows berry well dat Marse Frank won' see yo', sah, but anyhow I does yo' de favour to send in dis yere card."

"Very kind of you," said Cooledge as he scratched a match; "have a light?"

Pomp, however, refused the cigar with some dignity. This thought did not disturb the newspaper representative in the least.

The card was sent in by a messenger. In three minutes he returned, saying:

"Mr. Reade will see Mr. Cooledge at once in his office.

"Thank you!" said the reporter, with a smile and a friendly nod to Pomp, as he passed through the gate. The darky

scratched his black wool and rolled his eyes.

"Well, I neber!" he ejaculated. "Now dat man am sartin suah a repo'tah, an' Marse Frank done gib me o'dahs fo' to keep sich like out. Wha' de debbil do it mean? None ob mah bizness nohow!"

In order to explain Frank's readiness to see this particular reporter it will be necessary to retrograde a trifle in our story.

Two days previous Frank had received a letter, signed by this very same man, and which contained some marvellous subject matter.

To make matters more comprehensive let us read the letter in full. It was dated at New York City, in the office of the *American World*:

"Mr. Frank Reade, Jr.

"Respected sir, I take the liberty to write you upon a subject which I know to be possessed of such elements of strange and engrossing sort, that it will be positively sure to claim your intense interest."

Having thus led up to Frank's curiosity, the shrewd writer continued:

"I will relate, with as much brevity as possible, an incident which befell me in my capacity as news gatherer for the *World*. I had gathered a report of a 'longshoremen's riot on West Street, and went thither to get the particulars. On one of the wharves I met a strange genius, an old salt, who had just returned from a voyage to Chinese ports, and from his lips I gathered as strange a story as ever was heard.

"That this is true I feel well assured. In fact, I have the man pledged to appear and tell his story over again at any time I may wish.

"Jack Kane was his name. The ship in which he one day sailed from New York was called the *Henrietta*, Captain Abiel Snow. She carried out a cargo of

machinery and cotton stuffs, and was to bring home tea and knick-knacks.

"The voyage to Hong Kong was very propitious. There some trading was done, but as the tea cargo would not be ready for a month yet, Captain Snow seized an opportunity to visit Yokohama and Yeddo on the coast of Japan. He secured a cargo which was profitable and sailed.

"But when well into the Kamtchatka current, and but a few hundred miles from Yokohama, a typhoon descended with terrible fury. For two days the *Henrietta* ran northwards, half the time nigh on her beam ends.

"Not until the ship was almost a hopeless wreck did the storm cease. Then she had only a mizzen mast standing. Where they really were none on board could guess. The compass refused to work and no accurate bearings could be taken.

"But Captain Snow figured roughly that they were drifting into the Behring Sea. It seemed incredible that they had been driven that mighty distance, but time proved it true.

"Six days the *Henrietta* made vain efforts to work her way southward. Wind and tide were against her, and she drifted finally between two distant points to land into a sea which must be adjacent to the southern coast of Tchanki, and which I doubt has ever been explored by man.

"Into this strange sea she drifted and here the current was lost. The water of this sea was dead. Moreover it was of a strange turgid yellow with glistening particles constantly boiling to the surface.

"The supercargo, who was a chemist, became at once interested and drew up a bucket of the water for examination. He applied a chemical test, and made the astounding discovery that the yellow water held fine dust-like particles of gold in solution.

"For a time Jack Kane declares that the captain and crew were crazed with the mighty discovery. The supercargo declared that it was only necessary to draw the sea water on board and subject it to a chemical analysis to obtain pure gold, enough to buy the kingdoms of the world, to make the yellow article the most common of all commodities. The effect of this can be imagined.

"The crew became visionary idiots. They laid subtle schemes and crafty plans.

"The ship's hold should be filled with the extracted metal, and they would market it in Europe. Then they would return for more, keeping the location of this Sea of Gold to themselves.

"Howells, the supercargo, explained the phenomenon of the presence of gold in the water in a logical manner. He pretended that great ocean springs sent fine clouds of gold-freighted sand up from the centre of the earth to be held constantly in solution in the ever boiling waters. The bed of this sea he reasoned must be rich in gold dust impregnated in the sands.

"A more stupendous discovery cannot be conceived. Of course every mother's son aboard the *Henrietta* was more than interested in the new project.

"All went to work like heroes drawing the water aboard while the chemist was to extract the precious dust. But suddenly a terrible cry went up. The ship had sprung a terrible leak.

"She was sinking fast. There was no time to lose. For a short while the crew were paralyzed with the horror of the thing.

"But life is dearer than gold and the boats were quickly lowered. There was barely time to get adrift. The *Henrietta* went to the bottom of the Sea of Gold.

"But Captain Snow cried:

"There are more ships in the world!

We will come back in another and reap the fortune we must now for the time relinquish!"

"So they bent to the oars and pulled into the open sea, trusting to be picked up by some whaler. But the provisions ran out and starvation threatened. In the night the boats became separated.

"A storm came up. Only one boat's crew survived, and that was the captain's cutter, which was picked up by a Chinese junk and carried to Shanghai. There the captain died of the cholera. The seamen sickened of the experience, and regarding the Sea of Gold as accursed, abandoned all plans of returning to it.

"All shipped aboard various crafts, and Jack Kane finally found his way back to New York. This is the wonderful story of the Sea of Gold as he told it to me. It may be only a sailor's yarn, but he swears sacredly to its truth. If it is true, what subject can be of greater interest to the whole world?"

After reading this wonderful letter, Frank was decided upon giving the writer a welcome audience, for he was deeply interested.

CHAPTER II.

PLANS WERE FORMULATED.

WE may thus understand how Mr. Irving L. Cooledge, the smart reporter, gained an entrance to the machine works where his colleagues had so signally failed.

As he entered Frank Reade, Jr.'s private office the two men faced each other for a moment in silence.

Each was taking a mental inventory of the other. It was apparently satisfactory, for each smiled, and Frank indicated a chair, saying:

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Cooledge. Please be seated."

"Thank you," said the newspaper man. "You of course digested my letter?"

Frank like the brevity of this introduction of the subject, and replied:

"I did."

"I am curious to know how you regard it?"

"I will tell you. It may be a figment of that sailor's powerful imagination. Or——"

"Pardon me. He makes very solemn declaration that it is true."

"Sailor's are great romancers."

"But Jack Kane has a truthful appearance, I assure you. He offers to prove it by leading an excursion thither."

"Is he sure that he can do this?"

"There is nothing sure in life. But he is willing to try."

"It seems strange that this Sea of Gold has not been discovered by other navigators, being in whaling parts."

"Oh, it may be possible that other vessels have sailed right through it without the captains suspecting the nature of the yellow matter in the water."

"That is reasonable," agreed Frank, somewhat convinced, "but again, why have you selected me as your confidant in this wonderful story?"

"Oh, but you are the man above all others equipped for such an expedition. You have a submarine boat. It would not be necessary to extract the gold from the water in that case, as it could be taken in its richest deposit from the bed of the sea."

Frank's eyes flashed. The inspiration of the thing had seized him.

"I have another theory to account for the non-discovery of the Sea of Gold heretofore," said Cooledge, "this was advanced by Jack Kane himself."

"Ah, what is it?"

"It is possible that the deep sea disturbance at that point which brings the gold dust in solution to the surface is periodical."

"That may be true!"

"I can see nothing illogical in the narrative as rendered by Jack Kane."

Frank arose and paced the floor a moment. Then he turned and said:

"Were any soundings taken in this Sea of Gold?"

"Yes," replied Cooledge, readily, "the ocean floor seemed to be of a re-

markable even character, it being exactly one thousand fathoms deep wherever a sounding was taken."

"That is favourable," replied Frank. "Egad! Your story has caught me, friend Cooledge. Where is this man Kane? Can you bring him here?"

"In forty-eight hours."

"Do so then by all means, and we will discuss the matter seriously. If all is as you say—mind, I make no promises—we may find a way to visit the Sea of Gold."

"Hurrah!" cried Cooledge, leaping up. "You are a progressive man! I knew you would grasp the plan, Mr. Reade. Let us work together heart, soul, and hand. I will wire Jack Kane at once."

"One moment," said Frank. "Where are you stopping?"

"At the Readestown Hotel."

"Do me the honour to dine with me this evening. You are my guest."

"I accept the honour with thanks," replied the reporter profoundly. "Until then, I will wish you adieu."

When Irving L. Cooledge walked out of the machine shop gate that day he was in a state of bliss. He had not seen the submarine boat, nor could he send his publishers a story regarding its character.

But after wiring Jack Kane with true reportorial enterprise, he sent a modest squib to the *World* as follows:

"Frank Reade, Jr. is reported to be in collaboration with Irving L. Cooledge, the correspondent of the *World*, upon a trip to the North Pacific, for research and exploration aboard Mr. Reade's new submarine boat. Mr. Cooledge will furnish the *World* with exclusive details of this projected enterprise."

As this was dispatched, the smart reporter buttoned up his coat fulsomely and muttered with, perhaps, a pardonable thrill of exultation:

"Won't my brother journalists be green with envy when they read that. But when they learn that it is true what then—oh, what then?"

Cooledge may, perhaps, be excused a modest bit of quiet exultation. It is in the nature of man to take delight in a victory.

That evening he dined with Frank.

Before he left for his hotel they were the warmest of friends, and fully consigned to the project of visiting the Sea of Gold.

"Why, if the story is true," declared Frank, "and we find gold in such quantities, it will revolutionise the world."

"Just so!" agreed the reporter; "and I have faith in Jack Kane."

It did not take Jack Kane long to get out to Readestown.

He was closeted with Frank and Cooledge and subjected to a long and trying examination. But he showed no equivocation in any detail.

"Hang me fer a sculpin'!" he cried, finally, "ye ought to be satisfied with the word of an honest man, mates! Go along with old Jack an' he'll prove it, by Mother Carey's chickens!"

"That settles it," cried Frank, "we shall start at once. Come aboard the *Deep Sea Canoe* and look her over."

Frank led the way to the interior yard of the works. Here was a deep tank or basin of water with a canal which locked down into the big river below.

In this tank floated the new invention. Old Jack and Cooledge gazed at it with wondering eyes.

"Great whales!" ejaculated the old salt, "she looks like a Turkish galley without sails. How does she fill the wind?"

"You forget," reminded Cooledge, "she is a submarine boat and has no use for sails."

"Oh, in course," admitted the old sailor. "I never thought of that, mate."

But it did not require a second glance to see that the *Deep Sea Canoe* was a remarkable craft.

In her lines she was somewhat after the pattern of a canoe with high bulwarks and rounded stern. The material of which her hull was built was the toughest of steel.

Her deck was broad and spacious and well guarded with brass rails. Two masts rose fore and aft, but they were not rigged for the carrying of sails.

Forward in the bow was a bell-shaped structure which served for an observation tower and pilot house. It had a door which could be hermetically sealed, and windows of toughest plate-glass

Aft was a square cabin with windows, and also a vestibuled entrance. Over this cabin was a small quarter-deck upon which was placed a search-light of many candle power.

Amidships was the curious dome-shaped reservoir or automatic tank by means of which the boat could be lowered or raised under water.

It was provided with pneumatic valves for the expulsion of the water and a myriad of suction cylinders in the dome for the intake. So cleverly were these worked that the boat instantly sank or rose at the will of the engineer.

The interior of the submarine boat was a revelation.

Under the great tank was the electrical machinery, dynamos, and engines. These were all operated upon a storage system, the secret of which was known only to Frank Reade, Jr.

The cabin aft was most richly furnished and equipped. There were berths for the voyagers and all the luxuries and comforts of a well-appointed home.

Below decks there was a dining saloon, a cooking galley, and other compartments. The pilot-house forward was equipped with nautical instruments, the steering wheel, and an electric key-board which governed the engines.

But the most wonderful thing of all, perhaps, was the electric and chemical generator which kept the boat furnished with fresh air while under water.

Tubes ran over the interior of the vessel which were busy distributing the manufactured air, and an ingenious device disposed readily of the vitiated atmosphere so that a healthy circulation was always in progress.

Everything necessary to a safe and extended existence under water had been provided for, and Cooledge particularly was impressed with this fact.

He recognised the truth that only a great genius could have safely perfected such a marvellous invention. He could not help but regard Frank Reade, Jr., with a feeling akin to awe.

Jack Kane could make no comment. He was a sailor, and always accepted new wonders in an phlegmatic way.

But he did say:

"Blow me hard, mates! It is the

neatest little craft I ever went aboard! We ought to make a fine cruise aboard her. I'm free and easy to start for the Sea of Gold at any time."

"It shall be within two days," declared Frank. "All that will be necessary is the placing aboard of stores and supplies."

"We will be gone many months?" asked Cooledge.

"Yes; perhaps six or more," replied Frank. "but we shall not fall short of stores in a year. Now, let all be on hand and ready in two days."

"Good!" cried Cooledge, joyfully. "There will be no mistake. But how shall we proceed to the open sea?"

"Down this canal to the river," replied Frank, "thence it is easily navigable to the sea. Once on the ocean blue, we will round Cape Horn and strike directly across Oceania to Kamtchatka. A rather roundabout course, but the only available one."

"There ought to be a shorter."

"But there is not."

The discussion ended thus. Then Cooledge and Kane took their departure. The reporter wrote up the exclusive description of the new boat and sent it off. It was a feather in his cap, to be sure, but he little realised what mighty adventures were before him.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE PACIFIC.

IT would be a waste of time and tax the readers' patience to describe in detail the start of the *Deep Sea Canoe* upon her mighty voyage.

Suffice it to say that a great throng were gathered upon the river banks and cheered the boat and its crew. Then the *Canoe* glided away on its course to the sea.

The voyage to Cape Horn was made mostly on the surface, the only reason for a descent being to escape a hard storm or choppy sea.

Cape Horn was rounded in due time, and the western seaboard of the South American continent was followed northward to Panama.

Thence the course was set north-westerly across the North Pacific.

It was a mighty stretch and might tax engines of the stoutest vessel. But the *Canoe* was a very fast sailer and made good progress.

To detail all the little incidents of the trip thus far would require volumes. We have deemed it of more interest to take the reader quickly over them to the thrilling events of our story.

Barney and Pomp were happy to be once more afloat. Life was apt to grow monotonous to their ardent natures in Readestown.

Daring spirits they were, and never so well pleased as when in the thickest of deadly peril. Change of scene and incident was verily necessary to their existence.

They were irrepressible practical jokers, and fond of a lively wrestle. They made friends with old Jack Kane, and the trio were speedily warm friends.

There was considerable leisure time on board while the submarine boat was cleaving its northward way through the Pacific.

Vessels were few and far between, and it was only necessary to keep an ordinary look-out, for the weather was fine.

Jack Kane did the most of this, while Barney and Pomp busied themselves below decks.

Frank and Cooledge spent most of their time in the main cabin discussing the charts and the possible location of the Sea of Gold.

They knew that every day, aye every hour, was drawing them nearer to the Mecca of the deepest interest. Yet the time seemed interminable.

"I think it is a pity," said Frank, "that we cannot have a waterway through the narrow Isthmus, which connects the two Americas. The idea of having to travel around Cape Horn to get into the North Pacific."

"You are right," agreed the reporter, "but so long as politics rule the United States all objects of that sort, which are of vital convenience but not of great profit, will be suffered to go uncompleted. The exponent of the gospel will tell you that immorality and social vice is the bane of our country, the temperance

advocate that strong drink is its ultimate destruction, but I tell you the downright curse of the United States to-day is the politician."

"You speak emphatically," said Frank, with a smile.

"I cannot render too much emphasis," declared the scribe. "I tell you it is true, and no man living has a better chance to view the exact state of public affairs than the reporter. Everything in America to-day is subservient to the deep underhand and almost always dishonest game of politics. It rules the country through Congress, and even holds the President remorselessly in its grip. It dictates the course of foreign affairs, often to the dishonour of our flag that some shrewd capitalists may profit by it. No man to-day can hope to enter public office unpledged to a sect of dishonest, grasping rogues, who hold their country's honour lightly, and their own purse strings dear. It is the truth. Oh, for the flames of Sodom and Gomorrah, that a regeneration might be enacted and honest men be enabled to practise honesty with profit."

Frank opened his eyes wide and stared at Cooledge.

"Whew!" he exclaimed. "What a speech-maker you are. You missed your calling when you became a reporter. You should have become a speaker."

"I could not become a statesman and preserve my conscience," replied Cooledge, tartly. "Now you have my idea of politics!"

"Are you not a little radical?"

"No! I speak of things I know. But enough of politics. Let us go out on deck!"

The Pacific was in a dead calm. The sky hung yellow and silent overhead. It was a warm day, for they were in the tropics.

Barney and Pomp, with old Jack Kane, were having a game of checkers, under the forward awning.

The Irishman and the negro were both excellent players, and thought they had picked up a solid snap when they invited old Jack to take a hand.

"Keelhaul me!" exclaimed the old salt; "I can climb a foreyard or set a

sky-scraper easier nor I can play checkers. But I'll go ye a bit of a breeze!"

Frank and Cooledge drew near to watch the game.

Barney was sitting opposite the old salt. A few moves had been made and the Celt, who had begun with much confidence, became suddenly puzzled by the old seaman's position.

"Be me sowl!" ejaculated the Celt. "I niver saw min set that way afore. I think I'll draw wan from yure king row, sor!"

"Heave away!" blustered old Jack. "I'll come about now and board ye. Take a jump."

Barney did take the jump. The result was that Jack got three men for one and landed in the Celt's king row. His game was shattered.

"Mither presarve us!" gasped the astounded Celt, "yez cum it over me bad that time. But ye'll niver work that game agin. Set the min over."

The men were set over again and a new game started.

It was evident that Barney regarded the moves of his opponent as pure luck. This time he would show him a thing or two.

The game opened.

The bystanders were now intently interested. Several lightning-like moves were made.

Both men now had their forces in the middle of the board. But old Jack had the move on Barney.

The Celt rolled his eyes.

"I thought yez didn't know how to play this game?" he cried. "Shure yez have the best av me agin."

"I can reef and hand better, sir," replied old Jack, "but square away and fill your sails. It's a clear course!"

"Clear fer yez, but not fer me."

"Golly!" sniffed Pomp. "I'll bet I wouldn't let anybody beat me so easy as all dat."

This was enough for Barney.

"Shure, he'd niver give ye a man," he flashed. "Yez wudn't be in it fer a minit, and I'll bate my hat agin yures that I'm roight."

"I take yo' on dat, sah," cried Pomp. "Will yo' play me a game, sah?"

"I reckon so, mate," replied the old salt. "Any number ye want."

Barney arose and Pomp took his place. The darky led out boldly, and by good luck got the move of his opponent.

Kane had thus far played in a careless manner. Now he leaned forward and studied the situation a moment.

Then he made a couple of quick moves.

Barney began to grin.

"Begorra, he has ye beat now, naygur," he roared. "Phwat did I tell yez?"

"Don' yo' fret, sah!" sniffed Pomp as he shot out with his king row. Kane promptly made three exchanges, and then literally swept the board. The game was over.

For a moment the darky's eyes were like moons.

"Well, I neber did!" he ejaculated.

"Phwat did I tell yez?" roared Barney in a paroxysm.

Frank and Cooledge also laughed heartily.

"You are quite a player, Jack," said the smart reporter nonchalantly; "don't you want another victim?"

"With submission, sir," replied the old salt. "I can hand and reef better than I can play checkers. Those land-lubbers gave me good openings."

"Begorra, I didn't do it av me own free will," declared Barney.

"No sah," chimed in Pomp.

Cooledge winked at Frank and seated himself opposite Kane. Old Jack took a fresh chew of tobacco.

Then the game went on.

This time the shrewd old sailor found his match. It would be impossible to describe the game without the aid of diagrams.

But it was a great game.

For a time it was doubtful which would win. Forty-five minutes were required to play it out. Then the reporter won by a dazzling move.

"You are a master at the game, Jack," he said coolly, as he arose and lit a cigar. "You gave me a hard pinch."

"Douse me for a shad!" ejaculated old Jack. "You are the best man I ever played against!"

"Compliment versus compliment,"

laughed Frank. "Each of you has missed his vocation."

"How so?" asked Cooledge.

"They say that a good checker player should be a good general. You should be in the army."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the reporter, contemptuously; "I don't believe a word of that. One of the most noted generals I ever met could not beat a child at the game."

So engrossed were all in the games that little heed had been given to other things. Frank now chanced to glance seaward.

A great cry escaped his lips.

"A coral isle," he cried, "port the helm, Barney, or we'll be on the reef!"

"Aye, aye, sor!"

The head of the submarine boat swung about. Barney saw an opening in the reef and sent the *Canoe* through it.

This brought them into a deep and beautiful lagoon with water as placid and blue as a northerly sky. At once it was seen that the little isle was an atoll.

A strip of sandy beach encircled the lagoon, and back of it palms rose with refreshing greenness. It was a relief to the eye to gaze upon the shore.

In general appearance the atoll did not differ from hundreds of such isles in the Pacific. But a number of questions instinctively presented themselves to the voyagers.

Was the isle inhabited?

Had it ever been visited by white men before? Might not it be the home of cannibals? Was it upon any chart?

For some time the voyagers gazed upon it in much wonderment, then Cooledge exclaimed:

"On my word it is a pretty picture. Eh, Frank?"

"You are right!" agreed the young inventor. "It tempts one to get out upon those smooth sands for a walk."

"And may we not?" cried the reporter, eagerly. "I am sure it would do us all good."

"No, thankee! Not for me," declared old Jack. "I've been in these seas before, mates. These South Sea natives carry poison darts. One of them lodged in your planking is worse than a rope at the yard-arm."

"You may be right, Jack," agreed Frank: "it is true that there is not a little risk in venturing ashore upon an unknown isle. The natives are apt to be very hostile, and their poisoned darts I know are very deadly."

"Howly Mither," ejaculated Barney, pointing beyond the tops of the fringe of palms. "Shure, do yez see the loikes av that! We're not the only visitors to this isle to-day."

CHAPTER IV.

THE "ROXANNA."

ASTONISHED, all gazed in the direction indicated by the Celt. And they saw what, it seemed very strange to them, that they had not seen before.

Above the palms there was reared the tall masts of a ship.

They were bare a moment since and thus had escaped observation, but now a white topsail spread out to the light breeze.

It was easy to see that beyond the narrow strip of the atoll, and on the seaward side of the isle, there was a full-rigged ship. She was lying quite close under the isle.

"A ship!" cried Cooledge, pulling out his note book and making an entry.

"She's a tea wagon I'll make my 'davy," growled old Jack. "She stands up like a church."

"Be jabbers, phwat kin she be afther doin' here?" cried Barney. "Shure it's no port of entry that I kin see."

"Huh!" ejaculated Pomp, "yo' kaint see nuffin. She may be jes' tradin' wif de natives."

"Ye're neither of yer right, I make it," cried old Jack. "It's likely she's put in here for water, or mebbe to git some fruit or limes for the scurvy."

"Jack is undoubtedly right," declared Frank; "she is very likely making ready just now to put out to sea again. See! the topsail is filling."

"What shall we do?" cried Cooledge in something of excitement. "Ought we not to speak with her, Frank?"

Before any reply could be made to

this query the distant boom of a gun was heard.

"Somebody's ashore, an' that's to call 'em off," declared Jack.

"Then we must hurry if we would speak her," cried the reporter. "I have some curiosity to learn her name and destination."

"There is only one way to do that," replied Frank. "We must leave the lagoon and work our way around the reef. It will be a ticklish task, and I think we had better do it under water."

"Good!" cried Cooledge; "let us start at once."

Barney sprung into the pilot-house, but in that very instant those on deck were greeted with a startling spectacle.

From the fringe of palms a number of men sprung out on the sandy shore of the lagoon. They were seamen, and at sight of the submarine boat made an excited demonstration.

"Ahoy!" came across the blue waters. "What craft is that?"

"Ahoy!" replied Jack Kane, "this is the submarine craft *Sea Canoe*. What craft are you?"

"We are the *Roxanna*, Captain Jerry Phillips, from Kittery, Maine, U.S.A.," was the stentorian reply. "We are from Sumatra on the way home. Who is your captain and where are you bound?"

Old Jack looked at Frank, who nodded, and the old salt replied in his foghorn voice:

"The owner of this ere craft is her skipper. His name is Frank Reade, Jr., of Readestown, U. S. A., and we're bound fer Kamtchatka if we have luck."

"Here's wishing ye the same!"

"Fair v'yage to you!" retorted Jack.

"We'd like to come aboard if ye'll send a boat off."

Frank stepped forward.

"Ahoy!" he cried. "We will sail around the atoll and meet you alongside if you will wait for us!"

"Ay, ay!" came back the reply.

"We'll do that, mates!"

Then the seamen of the *Roxanna* disappeared in the woods and the head of the submarine boat came about.

Out of the lagoon the *Sea Canoe*

glided. Once outside the network of reefs were encountered.

Frank was convinced that it would be safer to travel under the surface where these dangerous obstructions could be seen and located.

So the voyagers all retired from the deck and the doors and windows were hermetically sealed.

Then Frank turned the lever which filled the sinking tank and down went the boat.

For a moment all was gloom, but the next moment the electric lights blazed forth and a marvellous scene burst upon the view of all.

This was the first time they had seen the bed of the Pacific. It was like a glimpse of a new, strange and wonderful world.

The white reefs of spotless coral formed arches and columns of rare beauty and shape. The glistening, silvery sands made a carpet beneath them studded with vari-coloured shells.

Strange fish of various shapes and colours darted here and there, or in some cases came boldly up to the plate-glass observation windows.

Here and there the elusive form of a huge shark shot flash like through the clear water. The submarine voyagers were for a time spellbound.

"By the great horn spoon!" cried Cooledge, "I wish I could photograph this scene. It cannot be described effectively in words."

"You are right," assented Frank. "It is certainly a glimpse of a different world, the world of the deep sea."

"Begorra, I cud almost make up me moid to be a fish to live in such a foine place as this!" cried Barney.

"Golly! I jes' laike to git some ob dem lubly shells," averred Pomp.

Old Jack Kane shifted his quid and said philosophically:

"It's ther home of many a poor sailor, mates. Davy Jones' locker we calls it, and I've come nigh to laying my bones in it many the time."

"You are right, Jack Kane," said Frank. "Many a poor sailor has found his home in these alluring sea depths. Many a good ship's timbers have rotted in sands like these."

But time was being lost, while the voyagers knew that the crew of the *Roxanna* were waiting on the other side of the atoll.

So Frank started the submarine boat ahead. It was not very easy work picking their way through the coral reefs.

But it was safer sailing under the water than on the surface. So gradually the boat worked her way among the reefs.

After what seemed an interminable space, Frank said:

"We ought to be somewhere near the *Roxanna*. I believe I will send the boat to the surface and see."

Up sprung the *Canoe* and burst into daylight to give the voyagers, as well as the crew of the *Roxanna*, a surprise.

The captain and his men were watching the lower headland of the atoll for some sign of the *Canoe* when, to their amazement, it leaped up from the sea depths almost under their ship's quarters.

Captain Phillips gave a sharp oath and start of amazement, and the seamen were for a moment seized with superstitious fear.

But Frank Reade, Jr., and Cooledge almost instantly appeared on deck and hailed them.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, captain," cried Frank, with a salute. "I am Frank Reade, Jr., master of this submarine vessel."

"Eh? blow me hard!" roared the Yankee captain. "I'll swear I'm not in a dream, but it looked just now as if you had come up out of the depths of the sea."

"And so we did," replied Frank.

"Eh, w-what?" sputtered the astonished skipper. "What do ye mean by that? Scuttle me, if I can understand."

"Oh," laughed Frank, "I do not wonder at your surprise. I should have told you that this is a submarine boat, and built for the purpose of sailing under the sea as well as upon it."

"Great figgerheads! Ye don't mean it!" ejaculated Phillips. "I've heard 'em talk about the possibility of such a thing but it's the first time I ever saw it done! A submarine boat! Wall, I'll

be keel-hauled! How do you make it work?"

The two crafts were now so near together that they could almost shake hands across the gap. Frank proceeded to describe the workings of the submarine boat as best he could.

Phillips was mightily interested. Then Frank went aboard and was shown courteously into the cabin.

Barney and Pomp and Kane fraternized with the crew, and Cooledge managed to get some valuable notes from the first mate.

Then the captain and mate returned the visit and went aboard the *Canoe*.

"By jingo!" cried Phillips; "if I had your boat, Mr. Reade, I'd do nothing but seek for deep sea treasure all the time! There's many a rich Spanish galleon at the bottom of this ocean!"

"We are on our way to explore a reputed Sea of Gold," said Frank; "it is supposed to exist somewhere near the Kamtchatka coast."

Then Phillips waxed deeply interested in the project of the voyagers. He asked all manner of questions.

"If I hadn't this cargo aboard," he cried, "I'd go with ye! Dash me if I wouldn't!"

"I fear you would find it a foolish trip," said Frank. "We are by no means sure of gaining our end."

"Hang me high if I care for that," cried the captain. "I'll always take a chance. Hey! what is that?"

A great shout of alarm went up from the sailors and they sprang into the rigging. Of a sudden the air was filled with a dull thunderous booming, and the little atoll rocked and swayed violently and mysteriously.

CHAPTER V.

FATE OF THE ISLAND.

IN an instant Phillips and the mate sprang aboard the *Roxanna*. Frank gave a shout of alarm.

Into the cabin sprang all the submarine voyagers. Instantly the doors and windows were hermetically sealed.

The sea, so placid but a moment before, seemed now to heave and pitch as if possessed by an evil spirit. The atoll rocked and swayed in a terrific manner.

The first impression of all was that a tidal wave was coming, accompanied with an earthquake. This was partly right.

A mighty internal convulsion, not uncommon in those seas, was causing the atoll to crumble and sink into the ocean.

It was necessary for the two vessels to get out of that locality in the quickest possible time, or harm might come to them.

Should the submarine boat be drawn into the vortex it would not be so serious as would be the case with the *Roxanna*, which would undoubtedly be wrecked.

It was easy enough for the *Canoe* to glide away from the spot, but the ship could not move so quickly. It was necessary to bend the sails first, and already seamen were in the tops.

The anchor cable was cut and the vessel's bow turned seaward. But the faint breeze hardly moved her through the water.

"We'll never get out of this, mates," shouted Captain Phillips; "if ye ever get back home, send word to Kittery what became of us."

"My soul!" exclaimed Cooledge, "he has spoken the truth, I fear. He will never get away in time."

"Then we must help them," cried Frank.

"Ah, but how?"

"Take them in tow."

"Can it be done?"

"Why certainly!"

Frank stepped out of the pilot house and shouted.

"Captain Phillips, ahoy!"

"Aye, aye!" came back the answer.

"I'm coming under your bow. Stand by to throw us a cable and we'll take you along with us!"

"Good for ye, mate!" replied the overjoyed skipper. "Ye'll never be sorry for that!"

Barney and Pomp instantly rushed out on deck and to the stern. The seamen heaved the hawser down upon the deck of the *Canoe* and it was made fast.

Away glided the submarine boat and her tow.

They were none too soon.

There had come a lull in the earthquake. Half of the atoll was partly submerged.

Brief as the lull was it enabled the two vessels to get a reasonable distance from the fated isle. All this had occurred in a much less space of time than it has taken to tell of it.

And the plucky little *Canoe* was every moment increasing the distance.

But the scene at the atoll now was of the most thrilling description. The voyagers gazed upon it with awe.

There came a dull, muffled, and thunderous roar. It seemed as if the sea would heave mountains high. Down sank the bluffs and palm groves, and the turbulent sea made a vast eddying whirlpool over all.

The influence of the mighty commotion was felt most forcibly for miles about.

Great seas ran mountains high. The hawser had been cast off between the two vessels now, for fear that they might be dashed together.

But the *Roxann* was out of harm's way. The increasing breeze filled her sails, and she held her head up well.

For some while the sea was badly broken. Then gradually it calmed down. Nowhere on the vast expanse could any sign of the atoll be seen.

Our adventurers had witnessed a phenomenon which they would never forget to the end of their days.

"Whew!" exclaimed Cooledge, with a prolonged whistle, "I shouldn't want to tie to one of these coral isles for any great length of time. A man would never be sure of waking up in this life, for the isle might sink while he was asleep."

The *Roxanna* was tacking towards the *Canoe* now, and Frank ran in closer so as to speak to Captain Phillips. The Yankee skipper was in the shrouds, and called through his trumpet:

"Ahoy, Captain Reade!"

"Ahoy!" replied Frank.

"We thank you for your assistance and hope you will have a lucky v'yage!"

"The same to you!" replied Frank. "Are you homeward bound?"

"Yes!"

"Farewell, then!"

"F-a-r-e-well!"

The *Roxanna* heeled over to the wind with every rag of canvas spread. She was a beautiful sight as she sped away to the southward.

Our voyagers watched her for some-while, then Frank started the *Canoe* once more to the north.

"Now for the Sea of Gold!" he cried.

But before six hours other islands came into view. Some of these were located upon the charts.

"We are in the heart of Oceania," declared Frank.

"How far from the Equator?" asked the reporter.

"About twelve hours sail. We shall cross it early to-morrow morning."

"I will be astir at that hour," declared Cooledge. "I don't want to miss the event."

As Frank predicted, the Equator was crossed the next morning early. They were now well on their way towards the Sandwich Isles.

Frank's course would leave Hawaii off to the east some hundred miles. At first he had thought of stopping at Honolulu.

But he changed his mind.

"When we come back," he said, "we will put in there."

Days passed without any exciting incident. The *Canoe* was keeping up a good rate of speed.

The seas were generally smooth and much broken with coral isles. Seldom were ships sighted, however, our voyagers being little in the path of ocean-going vessels, which were mostly sailing east and west.

But when a ship was sighted it was generally signalled, and once papers from San Francisco were obtained. These were of importance and interest.

Gradually the Sandwich group was left to the south-east, and now the North Pacific lay before them.

North of the thirtieth parallel there is hardly an island to be found, and from here to the Aleutians and Kamtschatka the deepest part of the Pacific exists.

The *Canoe* had stood its long voyage well.

The engines were as yet showing no

alarming sign of wear, and the rate of speed was of the best. Frank made careful calculations.

"At this rate," he said, "we shall make Kamtschatka a week earlier than I reckoned upon. The *Canoe* has proved a great sailer."

"Good!" cried Cooledge, with much ardour, "it seems as if we could not travel too fast. Now that we are drawing near to our destination I am all of a thrill with anticipation."

"It is about time for Jack to give us some point," said Frank.

The old salt hitched up his trousers, and studied the vessel's course for a moment.

"Wait until we sight the Aleutians, shipmates," he said, "then I'll agree to take the wheel. But we're makin' a good v'yage."

"I believe you!" said Frank.

But why dwell upon that rapid flight across the North Pacific. Suffice it to say that it was devoid of incident of any great interest.

And one day the western end of the Aleutian Archipelago was sighted. Then old Jack kept his word.

He took the wheel and set his course directly west to the Kamtschatka peninsula.

The run across was made in a few days, and one morning land broke into view.

Then the old salt altered his course to the northward and every day took fresh observations.

On the twentieth day of this sort of work, the other voyagers began to lose patience.

"I'm afraid you're going to have trouble in finding that Sea of Gold!" said Cooledge.

"Begorra, we're not makin' much profit at this rate!" sniffed Barney, with a smack of incredulity.

But the dogged old salt did not heed these words. He kept coolly and resolutely to work.

Frank Reade, Jr., was the only one now who did not lose faith in him.

The young inventor knew well enough how difficult it was to find a lost latitude. He saw that Jack was in deadly

earnest and that if he was an impostor he would not be so zealous.

So the young inventor defended the old salt. But one day a great fog fell over the sea.

It was a damper upon Jack Kane, for he had grown eager and excited with the conviction that he must soon find his way into the Sea of Gold.

He had just sighted two opposite bluff heads upon the western horizon, with an apparent reach of sea beyond, when the exasperating fog shut down.

But he had headed for the distant gateway, and kept the *Canoe* up to full speed. Suddenly his practiced ear caught an ominous sound.

It was the roar of breakers, and he brought the *Canoe* suddenly about, and she lay to in the heaving sea.

The fog was so thick that one could almost cut it. The distant screech of sea fowl was heard.

"We are close on to the land," said Frank. "What is the word, Jack?"

"Lay by till clear weather, skipper," advised the old salt. "I reckon we'll get into the Sea of Gold then!"

"Do you think so?" cried Cooledge, eagerly. "That will be good!"

Then he went to the rail and tried to pierce the wall of mist with straining eyes. He chanced to glance down at the water.

"Jericho!" he gasped.

Then he threw himself flat on the deck and scanned the sea closely as it surged about the motionless boat.

He saw the eddying yellow swirl, the currents of golden sand and particles heaving up to the surface continually.

For a moment he seemed paralysed. Then he shouted:

"Hooray! We've reached it! We're in the Sea of Gold."

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE SEA OF GOLD.

THESE startling words created a tremendous sensation.

"Where—what is it? What do you mean?" cried Frank eagerly, rushing forward. "What did you say, Irving?"

"Look for yourself," cried the reporter. "I tell you we have found it! "It is the Sea of Gold."

Frank glanced down at the water and gave a great start.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed; "I believe you are right!"

The cry of Cooledge had brought the others out on to the deck. Jack Kane was frantic with excitement.

"Yes, yes!" he shouted; "we have made it, mates! Hang me high, but ye know I told ye the truth now!"

The excitement now waxed intense. Buckets were lowered and some of the water brought aboard.

Frank passed several buckets of it through a fine cloth. The faint residuum of glistening particles left he had no doubt was gold, which seemed everywhere in solution. Cooledge was for at once beginning work to extract the gold from the sea water, but Frank said:

"No doubt it would be profitable, but it would also be a slow and laborious process. I think a better way is to descend to the bed of the ocean, which must hold a heavy deposit."

"Why of course!" agreed Cooledge. "I did not think of that!"

So all went into the cabin and the boat was lowered. Down she went until finally Frank said:

"I can see the bottom." Then he glanced at the gauge. "We are just one thousand fathoms deep."

"That's what we made the soundings, skipper!" cried old Jack Kane; "it was a universal depth all over this sea of gold."

But Frank now fell to watching the current dial, a curious little invention of his which indicated the direction of any deep sea current they might chance to be in.

He was astonished.

"Why, how is this?" he cried.

"Eh? What's wrong, skipper?" asked old Jack.

"Where are we?" exclaimed Frank, in sheer amazement; "the dial says that this current flows east by south. Now I supposed that the regular Kamtschatka current was north-east in its direction."

"Ah," said old Jack, "we're one

thousand fathoms deep, mate, and this may be an undertow."

"Stand ready!" cried Frank. "I want to make sure of that."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going back to the surface for a moment. I want to make sure that we are in an undertow."

Up shot the submarine boat to the surface again. Frank did not take his gaze from the dial.

It did not change.

The current was plainly strong to the southeast. This was directly off shore from the coast and in direct opposition to the Kamtschatka current.

To say that Frank was puzzled would be a mild statement.

"Where in the world are we?" he exclaimed in mystification. "Certainly land is west of us. But I do not understand these currents."

Nobody seemed able to offer a logical explanation. For a time Frank was deeply plunged in thought.

"If the fog would only lift," he finally declared, "we might solve the mystery."

"Is it so important?" asked the impatient reporter. "Why not give up some time to gold hunting and wait for the fog to dissipate?"

"Very well," agreed Frank, "we will go back to the depths. Let her go down, Barney."

The Celt pressed the tank lever and the boat sank again. Once more she rested upon the sands of the Sea of Gold.

The current which seemed to carry the golden dust in solution, seemed to sweep about the boat with great strength. The bottom of the ocean was like a well-swept floor.

The theory that the gold dust here made a deposit seemed partly exploded. Rather it appeared to be swept from the ocean bed and kept continually in solution. Frank was wholly unable to understand the phenomena.

In the bottom of the submarine boat there were sounding tubes by means of which Cooledge and Jack Kane had drawn up nearly half a ton of the sand. They began to wash it in a pan as miners are wont to do in placer diggings.

Their disappointment was great.

Hardly a particle of the precious deposit was yielded to them.

"It is a big fraud," cried Cooledge, disgustedly. "It proves to me that the Sea of Gold is one of Nature's impositions."

"It proves a far different thing to me," said Frank.

"Ah!" exclaimed the reporter, in surprise, "what may that be?"

"It proves that the gold held in solution in these waters is not caught up from bottom deposits, but is brought here from a distant quarter."

Cooledge stared at Frank.

"From a distant quarter?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. This sea of gold is nothing more than a vast bay or an inland sea, into which some mighty river or stream pours a powerful current. From this river comes the gold, you may be sure."

"That is a very clever theory," declared Cooledge, "but what becomes of the gold dust washed down by this powerful current? It must find a deposit somewhere."

"Undoubtedly!" agreed Frank, "but it is over such a large area that it becomes difficult to find it in any paying quantity. Very likely this current strikes the Kamtschatka current, and the gold becoming unnoticeable by more ample solution is probably distributed far into the Arctic seas and over the northern Pacific."

Cooledge was staggered by this divination.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "What a guesser of riddles you are, Frank. No doubt you have hit it."

"It is only a theory. I may be wrong. But one thing is certain. This gold is never analogous to the bed of this part of the ocean, nor can it make a deposit here, for the swiftness of the current and its own lightness hold it in perpetual solution."

"In that case," suggested Cooledge, "if we are to find gold in paying quantities we ought to strike the fountain head, i.e., the mouth of the river from which this deposit likely emanates."

"That is just the idea," replied Frank, "and we will do that."

"There is little use in trying to mine the precious metal here."

"Not a bit!"

Jack Kane interposed no objection, so it was decided to follow up the current which brought the deposit of gold with it. The adventurers already felt that they had an enterprise on hand which was destined to give them no slight amount of work.

The submarine boat therefore began to follow up the current as rapidly as possible. As they went on the gold deposit in the water seemed to increase in density.

The searchlight could not penetrate half the usual distance. It was necessary to proceed slowly.

For several hours the boat kept on thus. Then an idea occurred to Frank.

"I have it!" he cried.

"What!" exclaimed Cooledge. "Is it a new plan?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"I am going to the surface once more to see how near we are to the coast. The fog must be dispelled by this time."

"By all means do so!" cried the reporter eagerly. "That will be the best move you can make."

Frank touched the lever, and the *Canoe* rose rapidly. A few moments later they were upon the surface.

As Frank had hoped, the fog had lifted, and sunlight was all about them. All eyes were turned westward.

And there upon the horizon a faint dark line was seen.

"Hurrah!" cried Cooledge, "there is the land we have been looking for! It is probably Kamtschatka."

"Ye're right, mate," declared Jack Kane; "but if I may make free, mates, I don't see the logic of your reckoning."

Frank and Cooledge looked astonished.

"Eh?" exclaimed the latter. "What are you driving at, Jack?"

"Easy, mates! Ye are expecting to find a big river coming out of Kamtschatka?"

"Yes."

"I reckon ye'll never find it."

This surprising announcement was

received by Frank and Cooledge in sheer amazement. It was some moments before Frank ventured to say:

"Why do you doubt the possibility of such a river, Jack?"

The old sailor shifted his quid.

"Well," he said, slowly, "my reasons are slick and clear. I've coasted the hull length of Kamtschatka an' I never saw the mouth of a river yet big enough to make a current clean across this ere sea."

"Is it not possible, though, that such a river might exist?" asked Frank, "and might have escaped your notice?"

"It mought be so, mates," replied the old seaman, "but 'tain't hardly likely. Leastwise I've never heerd any record of it."

"Well," said Frank, finally, "you may be right, Jack. But it looks to me that our only way to discover the truth is to pursue our present course and trust in Providence."

Old Jack lounged away without further argument. His declaration had staggered Frank and Cooledge despite their confidence.

Some time was spent in studying the distant coast line and the expanse of sea intervening.

Then Frank declared:

"At any rate we can do no better than to follow up that undercurrent. I believe it is our only way to solve the mystery."

"So do I!" agreed the reporter.

So the *Canoe* was again sent to the bottom. Once more it proceeded to follow up the current.

As the bed of the ocean was quite smooth and the uniform depth was one thousand fathoms the *Canoe* was enabled to proceed at a lively rate of speed.

As it proceeded, one striking fact was noted. The current became every moment stronger.

This was evidence that they must be approaching the fountain head or mouth of the presumed river. Frank had half a mind to go to the surface again.

But he did not. Barney was at the key-board. Suddenly he gave a loud shout of wildest alarm and brought the boat to a dead stop. He was just in time to avert the catastrophe.

CHAPTER VII.

A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT.

THAT which had caused Barney to bring the boat to such a sudden stop was a thrilling sight.

Suddenly there seemed to shut down from above and directly in front of the boat a wall of jagged weed-strewn rock.

This made a high roof overhead and extended far into the distance. The boat was directly under this.

At her present altitude her decks would have certainly been scraped and a hole might have been made in them. This would have proved fatal to all on board.

"Begorra, phwere are we?" shouted the Celt. "Phwat do yez say to this, Mishter Frank?"

Frank had gained the Celt's side and his surprise can hardly be depicted in words.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated. "You stopped just in time, Barney. We have run into a deep sea cave!"

"A cave?" cried Cooledge, in amazement. "How did it happen? But—we are yet in the current."

All glanced at the dial.

"Then the river is a submarine stream," declared Frank. "It comes out of this cavern."

This fact seemed established beyond all dispute. The astonished voyagers exchanged glances.

Jack Kane was right.

The deep sea current in the Sea of Gold did not come from any Kamtschatka river, at least not that was on the surface.

To say that all were surprised would be a mild statement. More than this they were deeply interested.

"It is an underground river," said Cooledge, with conviction. "I believe that we are at this moment under the main peninsula of Kamtschatka."

"Where then can be its source?" asked Frank.

"Perhaps it extends all the way under the peninsula into the Sea of Okhotsk on the other side."

It was an astounding reflection. Truly they were entering upon a most marvellous discovery.

The theory was not at all improbable. Frank Reade, Jr., said with deep resolution:

"However that is we are in for it, and I mean to follow this mysterious river to its source."

"Good for you, Frank," cried Cooledge; "only to think of a trip under the Peninsula of Kamtschatka! who will believe our story when we return to civilization?"

"We can only give them our word," laughed Frank; "few would ever be able to disprove it."

Frank lowered the *Canoe* a safe distance from the cavern roof and started ahead once more.

The cavern was both wide and deep enough for the *Canoe* to travel in safety. For hours the craft kept on.

Barney was obliged to be continually on the alert, for fear the boat might collide with the walls or occasional pillars which were encountered. But no accidents of this sort luckily occurred.

What by the chronometer was a day and a night passed.

The *Canoe* was yet following the mysterious current through the earth. They had doubtless travelled a hundred miles in this manner.

Then there came a change.

Of a sudden the cavern roof receded upward and the electric lights grew paler. Barney gave a shout.

"Misther Frank!" he cried, "shure it's out av the cavern we are!"

"What!" cried Frank, in surprise, springing into the pilot-house.

"That can't be!" cried Cooledge; "we have not had time to pass under Kamtschatka yet."

"But it is true," cried the young inventor looking upward. "We are not in the cavern now!"

With which assertion Frank closed the tank lever. Instantly the boat began to rise.

The next moment she burst out of the water and into the open air. A clear blue sky was overhead.

And upon either side were high canyon walls. Between these rolled the

sluggish current of a river. In their rear was a blank wall of mountain height with an opening into which the great river vanished, and out of which they had just come.

"Jericho!" exclaimed Cooledge, "I did not look for this!"

"Yes, we did," cried Frank. "We were sure in the first place that the current came from a river."

"Why, sure enough it does!"

"Of course!"

"Well, I'm beat!"

"It does not, however, look to me like a stream large or powerful enough to make such a mighty reach out to sea."

"That is true, but probably we have followed a given channel all the way."

The walls which rose upon either side, were bare of verdure and forbidding. Far above a number of eagles were soaring slowly in a circle.

In wild Kamtschatka!

This was where they were.

The *Canoe* kept on up the river at a moderate speed. The high canyon walls began to dwindle, and finally new scenery was spread to view.

The river flowed between green banks, with broad rolling plains extending to the horizon line.

It was summer, and everything looked green and fresh. But no sign of human habitation was there.

It was one mighty wilderness. The current was yet thick with that yellow dust which was believed to be gold.

What tons of the precious metal was being washed into the sea! It seemed beyond comprehension.

"Now," said Frank, positively, "we shall surely find the source of this river of wealth. If we can locate the fountain head, we ought to reap the fortune quickly."

Cooledge was now all excitement.

As the *Canoe* glided along the current and deeper into the wilderness, he paced the deck with nervous, quick tread.

Suddenly he gave a cry.

The river had broadened, showing reaches of sand on either side. They glistened in the sun most brilliantly.

"Look!" he cried. "Here is the treasure trove! Millions of treasure there! See! it is all gold—all gold!"

Spellbound the adventurers all gazed upon the marvellous scene. The submarine boat ran lightly up to the shelving shore and was moored.

Then a plank was thrown out and Frank and Cooledge with Jack Kane sprang out upon the sands.

Each picked up a handful. It was almost solid with the precious metal.

It seemed as if Cooledge was bound to go insane with delight. He passed the shining stuff through his fingers and cried ecstatically:

"Gold—all gold! Millions and millions! Enough to buy the world! We are made—made!"

"Egad!" ejaculated Frank; "if this is really gold, we have discovered enough of it to make it one of the cheapest commodities on earth!"

Cooledge stared at Frank.

"If it is gold!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean? You don't really doubt its being gold?"

Frank shook his head.

"We have applied no test yet," he said gravely.

"Test? Why, is not our eyesight test enough? Is it not right here before us? Don't we know what gold is?"

"Ah, but there are many substances which resemble the precious metal," said Frank; "for instance, that curious substance commonly called fool's gold."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the reporter, contemptuously. "This is pure gold and I know it. Bring on your test."

Frank went back into the cabin, while Cooledge and Kane proceeded to gather heaps of the stuff. They were loth to doubt its nature.

But Frank returned speedily and had his acids with him. He spread some of the ore in a plate and applied the tests.

Cooledge and Kane watched him with deadly interest. After a moment Frank looked up. He could see that both were intensely pale.

"Well?" asked the reporter, huskily. "What do you make it, Frank?"

"Give us the broadside, mate," declared Kane. "What's the reckoning?"

"Well," said Frank, deliberately, "I am very sorry to disappoint you, but our

treasure trip is, after all, a base and hollow deception."

"What!" screamed the reporter, wildly. "I don't believe it! I tell you it is gold! It must be gold! Your test is at fault."

"Do you think so?" said Frank, calmly. "Then let me convince you. I will test it again. See! here is a gold coin. Notice how the acid acts upon it."

Cooledge grew calm, and watched Frank's second test carefully. Then he stood in silence for some moments.

He passed the yellow stuff through his hands longingly.

"Only fool's gold!" he muttered; "and so much of it here! Confound it! I ought to have known it! It would be impossible to find so much gold in one heap. Our dream of fortune is gone."

"Perhaps not," said Frank.

"What do you mean?"

"This deposit has turned out worthless. I have heard it said that gold is found in these mountains. Perhaps it may exist somewhere within our reach."

"Perhaps," said the reporter, moodily, "but hardly likely. The Sea of Gold was an hallucination after all. Well, Jack Kane, what have you got to say for yourself? It is you who got us off away up here."

The old salt was dumfounded.

"I make free to say that—that I don't make it out," he stammered. "Our skipper called it gold, and so did all the crew. Hang me high! it looks a heap like it."

"Yes," said Frank. "You are very excusable for being deceived, Jack. But then we have had a good voyage of exploration anyway."

"We shall have to let it go at that," declared Cooledge. "After all, gold would do me little good. I'm such a spendthrift. It is just as well. I shall still stick by newspaper work."

"And I can ship afore the mast again, lads," declared old Jack. "Everybody knows a seaman's money never stays by him."

"Then we are all satisfied," said Frank. "And that being the case I have a proposition to make."

This declaration created a genuine thrill of interest.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHINESE PIRATES.

EVEN Barney and Pomp were interested in this assertion of Frank's. The young inventor was thoughtful a moment, then continued:

"Of course we are all disappointed that the Sea of Gold has turned out to be a deception. But there is much treasure under the sea and on our way home we should be able to find some of it. Perhaps we can establish a fortune for each one of the crew. In other words, as this voyage of discovery has not turned out as we expected, suppose we organise a treasure hunt."

For a moment a dead silence reigned. Then Cooledge burst forth:

"Frank Reade, Jr., you are the best fellow on earth! What a golden promise that is! We shall be sure to find some sunken galleon in this mighty Pacific, and our reverses may after all become the best of fortune."

"Hooray!" shouted Jack Kane, wildly; "that's the best course we've steered by yet! We'll be sure to find our fortunes yet, an' by Mother Carey's chickens, if this old hulk gets safely back to port again, I'll tie up alongside some trim female craft an' settle down fer life! So help me Neptune!"

"Be jabbers Mither Frank niver got left yit!" affirmed Barney, positively.

"Golly, yo' kin bet we'll find dat gold afo' we gits back to Readestown!" declared Pomp, cutting a shuffle.

"So you all embrace the idea," said Frank. "Then let us go back aboard the *Canoe* and take our leave of this place as quickly as possible."

No second bidding was necessary.

All had seen enough of Kamtschatka.

They were very willing to leave and never set eyes upon it again. In a few moments they were aboard the boat once more.

It cast free of the shore and drifted out into the current. Cooledge took one regretful look at the yellow glistening banks and then went into the cabin.

The *Canoe* made quick time down the

river to the place where it suddenly vanished under the mountain wall.

Then the *Canoe* went beneath the surface and was a moment later speeding through the cavern on its way to the open sea.

The run back into the Sea of Gold was quickly made.

The cavern entrance was cleared, and Frank decided to ride to the surface. He pressed the tank lever and the boat leaped upwards.

Up she burst into the open sunlight once more. The voyagers saw the rugged coast to the westward some miles, the open sea to the east and south. But on the other hand and distant not a hundred yards was a strange looking craft.

She was a cross between a Chinese junk and a Malay proa. Her lateen sails were filled, and she was standing directly down for the *Canoe*.

"Look out, Frank!" cried Cooledge, warningly; "she'll be on to us!"

Frank shot the *Canoe* forward like a flash.

"We're out of her course now," he said. "Hail her, Barney! See what nationality she is!"

"All roight, sor," replied Barney.

"Frank," cried the reporter, in alarm, "I don't like the looks of that craft! She looks piratical!"

"Captain Kidd is dead," retorted Frank, with a laugh. "Hail her, Barney!"

The Celt's voice rang out, but at this moment Jack Kane rushed in.

"For Heaven's sake, skipper," he cried, wildly, "sink your boat! She is a Chinese pirate, as true as I live! She's training a gun on us now! Quick!"

But in that instant the dread catastrophe came. There was a dull boom, and something crashed through the pilot-house window, and striking the keyboard, passed out through the pilot-house wall.

It was a solid shot, and in that instant the submarine boat was rendered unnavigable.

She could not be made to sink or even steered. She floated upon the water like a log, helpless and useless.

With horror the voyagers stood for a

moment inactive in the pilot-house. Then another shot from the pirate's cannon followed.

It went wide, however.

Frank remembered now that the coast of Kamtschatka was a hiding-place for Chinese pirates, which infested those seas. They were the most bloodthirsty and relentless of barbarians.

"We are lost!" he ejaculated with white lips.

"To fall into their hands is death!" muttered Cooledge.

"By my anchor!" cried Jack Kane, rolling up his sleeves, "stand by to repel boarders! They must never take us alive! We'll die on the poop deck."

"Right!" cried Frank, arousing himself, "get your rifles, all. We must not yield."

Barney and Pomp had already procured their Winchesters.

The pirates, evidently fancying that they had disabled their prize, were now bearing down to claim it. At the swivel gun, the only piece of ordnance the junk carried, stood the gunner.

Frank saw this and cried:

"We have more to fear from that gun than aught else. Cover it, Barney and Pomp, and let no man approach it to fire it."

The two faithful fellows cheered, and Barney shot the gunner in his tracks. A cry of rage came from the pirates, and they opened fire with small arms.

Another of their number sprang forward to train the gun once more. But he dropped in his tracks.

Barney and Pomp concentrated their fire upon this spot. So hot was it that the cannon could not be used.

By this time Jack Kane and Cooledge had procured rifles. Frank went to work to detach the wires from the smashed keyboard.

He was mainly in quest of the steering key, and also that governing the engines. It would not do to sink the boat until the breach in her pilot-house was repaired.

The junk had ranged alongside, and was disposed to board the smaller craft.

But so hot a fire came from the Winchesters, that the crew thronging the rail fell like sheep.

Our defenders were protected by the steel walls of the cabin. They fired through loopholes in the cabin side.

From what could be seen of the pirates they were the worst looking lot of humanity that one could well imagine. To fall into their clutches would be like dropping among wolves.

The battle now raged fiercely.

But no harm was thus far done our defenders. The pirate loss was, however, quite considerable.

So furious were the rascals that they were unable to use their cannon or to board the tantalising little craft which had seemed so easy a prize that they made the air blue with Chinese oaths.

Savagely they fired volleys at the *Canoe*. But the steel walls turned the bullets aside.

Then the fiendish idea occurred to turn the junk's prow upon the *Canoe* and run her down.

Round came the unwieldy junk. Her sails filled before the wind. But just at that moment Frank had made the connections between the keyboard and the electric engines.

Quick as thought he set the *Canoe* in motion. She glided away from the junk like a flash. In a few moments she was fully two hundred yards to leeward.

The junk was in pursuit and again firing her cannon. But the little *Canoe* ran away from her with the greatest of ease.

The cannon shots all fell short. In less than twenty minutes the pirates had abandoned the chase.

The submarine voyagers were safe once more.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Cooledge with a deep breath, "that is what I call a close shave. I would not have dropped into the hands of those rascals for a good deal."

"We are in luck, certainly," agreed Frank, "it is luck that I was able to disentangle those wires in time."

"Is the injury a permanent one?" asked the reporter in alarm.

"Not at all," replied Frank. "I can arrange a new keyboard quite easily. the pilot-house wall needs to be patched and the glass replaced. We shall be all right again then."

Frank lost no time in carrying out these repairs. The *Canoe* quickly left the piratical junk out of sight and that danger was disposed of.

At night the *Canoe* lay to in a calm sea. The next day Frank completed the repairs and the *Canoe* was all right again.

They had not yet come within sight of the entrance to the Golden Sea; but the boat was now able to push forward a little faster.

After a while two distinct points of land were seen. Between them was the strait or channel by which they had entered the sea.

The expedition had in one sense proved a disappointment, though not a failure.

The Sea of Gold had been discovered and thoroughly explored, even to its very source. The disappointment consisted in the fact that the yellow dust held in solution in its waters was not gold dust.

Our voyagers were therefore prevented from reaping the mighty fortune which they had expected and hoped for; but they had not as yet become discouraged.

Not by any means.

The opportunity was before them of a treasure hunt at the bottom of the mighty Pacific. That it must yield valuable fruit there seemed little doubt.

"Begorra, it's not sorry I am to leave this part of the worruld!" declared Barney. "Shure it's a moighty forlorn and desolate lukin' place anyway!"

"Massy Lordy, yo's right dar, chile," declared Pomp, "I reckon de Atlantic Ocean am good enuff fo' me!"

"Avast there, my hearties!" cried old Jack, "there's no water on the globe so fine as the Pacific. Wait till ye get below the Tropic of Cancer. It's an earthly paradise among them islands."

"Shure, if that's so," cried Barney, "let us be afther gittin there at wanst."

Frank and Cooledge had been busy in the cabin discussing the outlook for the future.

Suddenly and without a moment's warning the submarine boat gave a lurch and went beneath the surface.

The cabin door and one window was open and water rushed like an avalanche through them. In an instant the cabin was filled and in the awful darkness and confusion all seemed truly lost!

CHAPTER IX.

BURIED ONE THOUSAND FATHOMS DEEP.

ONLY Frank Reade, Jr.'s ready presence of mind saved the day.

The young inventor had been sitting at a table opposite Cooledge. The cabin door and a window were open.

The others, Barney and Pomp and Jack Kane, were in the pilot-house.

Barney felt the boat give a peculiar thrill and lurch, and it seemed to reel from stem to stern. For one swift instant the Celt fancied that they had struck a rock.

Then a sharp cry pealed from his lips:

"Be me sowl, it's sinkin' we are."

Even in that moment the boat went under the waves. The three occupants of the pilot-house saw the water come surging into the cabin.

"Mither presarve us, it's lost we are!" yelled Barney. Then he pressed the lever which should have closed the cabin door and window.

But the pressure of the water was too great. The door was held open.

Pomp had presence of mind enough to shut the pilot-house door. Then Barney pressed the tank lever to raise the boat if possible.

But it would not work. This explained all. It was out of order.

Meanwhile Frank and Cooledge in the cabin would have been drowned like rats in a trap had it not been for Frank's presence of mind.

Quick as a flash the young inventor sprang up.

"This way, Cooledge!" he shouted. "Quick, for your life!"

The reporter needed no second bidding. He leaped over the table.

Frank flung open a door leading into the inner cabin. The water was to their knees as they passed through.

But fortunately the door opened into the cabin so that the pressure of the water helped them close it. They were saved.

Water to the extent of fully a hogshead full had rushed into the inner part of the boat. But it did little damage.

The cabin, however, as well as the tank was full to the top, and the

submarine boat sank in one thousand fathoms of water.

It rested in a forest of seaweed which presented gloomy and forbidding depths to the voyagers, through the plate glass windows.

The search-light was turned on by Barney.

The next moment Frank was in the pilot-house.

"For the love of heaven what has happened, Barney?" he cried. "What has brought all this about?"

"Shure, sor, the tank lever won't worruk. It's my opinion that it's broken, sor."

Frank put his hand to the lever. His face assumed a grave expression.

"Is the situation serious?" asked Cooledge, anxiously.

"Serious enough," said Frank. "We are anchored fast in one thousand fathoms of water."

"Jehu! shall we not be able to get to the surface again?"

"We shall hope so."

"This is a calamity."

"Yes, but we may congratulate ourselves that we escaped with our lives."

"Indeed that is true. But have you any plan to suggest?"

"We must first examine the break in the tank connections and see if it cannot be repaired," said Frank.

"Begorra, howiver will we get the wather out av the cabin?" cried Barney.

"That will be easy," declared Frank.

"One of us will go out by-and-by and close the door and window. Then we can pump the water out."

"Go out!" exclaimed Cooledge, "how can that be done?"

"With diving-suits," said Frank.

"Diving-suits?"

"Certainly! I will arrange that all right enough. Now, Barney, take your search lamp and come with me."

"All roight, sor!"

The Celt obeyed instructions and followed Frank into the tank room. The young inventor came out an hour later with a grave face.

Cooledge met him anxiously at the door.

"How is it, Frank?" he asked; "is the situation very serious?"

"I'm afraid it is," replied Frank evasively. "We will do the best we can to get her to the surface again."

"The best we can!" ejaculated the reporter with ashen face. "Is there any doubt about it?"

Frank inclined his head.

"A slight doubt."

"Mercy! then we must perish here at the bottom of this accursed sea! God help us!"

"Pshaw!" said Frank impatiently, "there is no use in giving way to despair. Come, Barney, you and Pomp must go out with me and close the cabin doors."

"All roight, sor!"

"I'se wid yo', Marse Frank."

In a few moments the two jokers had produced three curious looking diving helmets.

They were connected with what looked to be a huge knapsack. This was placed upon the diver's back.

"Where is your air-pump and life lines?" cried Cooledge. "Can Jack and I keep them all going, think you?"

"There is no such thing," replied Frank. "They are not necessary."

"Not necessary?"

"No."

"How do you make that out?"

"Do you see this?" said Frank, placing his hand on the knapsack. "Well, this contains a chemical generator and reservoir. It manufactures and circulates air in the helmet of the diver just as it is circulated on board this boat. There is a valve in the top of the helmet to let the bad air escape into the water."

"By Jove!" exclaimed Cooledge, "that is wonderful. Then you are able to travel anywhere unhampered!"

"Just so."

"But how long will this supply of chemicals last?"

"Oh, a long while. For days and even weeks, should the diver survive starvation."

By this time Barney and Pomp were equipped. Frank put on his own helmet and then the trio were ready for leaving the boat.

Fortunately there was also a door and vestibule leading out of the pilot house, and by means of this they left the interior of the boat.

Cooledge and Jack Kane watched them with interest.

Along the deck they crept as soon as they had got accustomed to the pressure, which was tremendous at that depth, and could not have been sustained but for the peculiar construction of the helmets.

They soon reached the cabin door.

This was easily closed and so was the window. Then they started to return to the pilot-house.

But Barney met with a mishap.

Some action of the undertow caused the boat to lurch a trifle. The Celt lost his balance and went over the rail.

Of course the fall was nothing, as he simply drifted down into the forest of seaweed some yards away.

But this was not all.

In the forest of submarine plants there lurked a monster, which seemed a cross between a whale and an octopus. In an instant a long coil shot out and encircled the Celt's body.

The others had only just a fleeting glimpse of the creature, as Barney was drawn out of sight in the seaweed. Then Frank gave a gasping cry of horror.

Pomp was so overcome that he clung to the rail of the boat for support.

"Oh, Massy Lordy!" he cried; "dat Irishman am done fo' now fo' suah. Oh, Marse Frank, wha' am we gwine to do?"

But of course Frank could not hear this appeal. It would have been necessary to have put their helmets close together.

But the young inventor made a comprehensive gesture to the ducky and sprang over the rail.

Into the seaweed forest Frank darted in pursuit.

He had an axe, which was slung at his belt, and with this uplifted he ran on.

Pomp was close behind him.

Meanwhile Barney was having lively work. The Celt was not disposed to yield without a struggle.

He also carried a short handled, keen-bladed axe. With this he hacked at the sinewy arm which encircled him.

The water was reddened with blood, and a furious commotion ensued. Barney could see a pair of cat-like eyes and a voracious maw, and he knew that all depended on keeping clear of this.

He had nearly severed the arm which held him, when another shot forth and wound about him.

This covered his head and threatened to crush his helmet. It also blocked his vision. For a moment he fancied that his fate was certainly sealed. He felt himself being drawn towards the ravenous jaws.

He fought desperately, but was unable to avert his fate. He grew weaker, and an awful horror seized him.

Was he to die thus?

He made one more desperate struggle. Then he felt the arm relax and it fell away. He saw a dark form beside him, and felt himself being dragged in an opposite direction.

At that same moment a voice reached his ears.

"Keep up, Barney, we are here to help you."

"Misther Frank!" cried the Celt.

Frank and Pomp had reached the spot just in time. Barney was not a yard from the monster's jaws when they reached striking distance.

Terrific blows at close quarters with the axes had brained the monster. Barney was saved.

Breathless and well exhausted all three now set out upon their return to the submarine boat.

Cooledge and Jack Kane from the pilot-house had witnessed the thrilling scene with intense excitement and fear.

They were powerless, however, to render help except by earnest prayer.

It was needless to say that they were delighted when the victory was won. A few moments later the three divers came aboard.

When once more in the cabin and their helmets were removed mutual congratulations followed.

"Golly fo' glory!" shouted Pomp. "I done fo't yo' was done fo', honey, fo' suah."

"Divil a bit," cried Barney, hilariously. "Shure it's hard worruk to git rid av a bad pinny. It's all roight I am, bad cess to the ould dragon av the sea, an' glad I am av that."

CHAPTER X.

FIGHT WITH A SEA MONSTER.

THE question now was as to how the cabin was to be emptied of its supply of sea water.

Frank, however, was never at a loss for an expedient.

He contrived to cut a hole in the partition level with the deck and inserted a hose. This was connected with a force pump which threw the water into the boat's tank.

In less time than it takes to tell it the cabin was pumped out slick and clean.

Then the voyagers were enabled to enter it.

Of course the damage was considerable. The rich furnishings and effects were all soaked with sea water, and there was no good way of drying them, save by exposure to the air.

As this could not be done until they should return to the surface, the cabin was not put in use. The doors were again closed.

Frank now went below again to examine the tank. He came up an hour later with a gloomy countenance.

The others could see that there was at present little hope. This led to reflection of a dismal sort.

They were certainly buried one thousand fathoms under the sea. What would be the end?

It was easy to figure it out.

The provisions aboard the *Canoe* would last for perhaps two months or a little longer. The supply of fresh water would fail then surely.

Starvation would then confront them. Death would come speedily, and the submarine boat would become their tomb.

"Well," said Cooledge after the first shock of the thing was over; "perhaps we might die in a worse manner. There is certainly but one thing to do and that is to meet it bravely!"

"That is true!" agreed Frank; "but we must not abandon hope yet!"

"Hang me high!" cried old Jack. "If the sharks wouldn't take a turn at me I'd risk a swim av being picked up by a Chineser!"

This gave Frank an idea.

Why not in case of exigency try the plan of reaching the surface. Perhaps a buoyant raft could be built which would take them to the upper air, and upon which they might drift until picked up by some passing vessel.

This did not seem wholly impracticable. Indeed had they been near the land it might have been possible to have walked ashore in the diving suits.

But all these things were only to be considered as the expedients of dire necessity.

Frank had not as yet abandoned his hopes of getting the submarine boat back to the surface.

Again he went below and examined the tank.

This time he crawled far under the sheathing and located the obstruction which prevented the automatic valve from working.

One of the rivets in a steel support had slipped out and let the heavy bar down upon the valve spring. This held the valve open so that it could not be closed by the automatic weights, which were worked from the pilot-house by means of electricity.

At once Frank experienced a thrill.

If only the rivet could be replaced and the bar lifted from the spring, the valve might be made to work again.

He secured the rivet and tried hard to adjust the bar.

But lying on his back as he was, he found this very difficult. His strength was bound to fail him.

In this extremity he called to Barney, who came to his assistance. The Celt made his way under the tank until alongside Frank.

Then both exerted their best efforts. By dint of much straining the bar was lifted. Barney held it up while Frank inserted the rivet.

The job was done.

With much elation the two men crawled out from under the tank. Frank rushed at once into the pilot-house.

Coolidge and old Jack Kane met him at the door.

"How is it, Frank?" asked the reporter, and then he read the truth in the young inventor's face.

"I think we have it fixed all right," said Frank. "I hope for the best."

Then he took hold of the lever. It refused to work.

For a moment Frank's brain reeled.

He had allowed himself to believe that the tank would empty itself now that the obstruction to the valve was removed. Why did it not work?

This was the question he asked himself.

Was there another obstruction?"

He paced the floor of the pilot-house moodily, only pausing once in a while to try the lever. But it would not work.

The others watched him in silence.

Finally Frank picked up his kit of tools and started back to the tank to, if possible, locate the second obstruction.

But Barney, who chanced to glance out of the window, gave a great shout of alarm.

"Be me sowl, Misther Frank, wud yez luk at the loikes av that!"

All looked out into the sea. Not one in the company but experienced a fearful chill.

There was a good cause for this.

Through the forest of seaweed there was thrust a hideous head with a mighty row of glistening fangs. The jaws were large enough to swallow a man with ease.

Back of them was visible long coils of a serpent's body with huge, glistening scales. What else could it be but a deep sea serpent?

For a moment the voyagers were spell-bound.

They would perhaps have felt not the slightest fear had it not been for the helplessness of the submarine boat, for they could have risen to the surface and given the monster a hard chase.

But helpless as they were, they could not avoid a sense of positive terror. Jack Kane was the first to speak.

"Great guns!" he ejaculated; "it's the sea serpent!"

"The sea serpent!" repeated Coolidge. "By Jove, I should say so!"

Then the much talked about serpent of the sea was no myth. Certainly this monster would pass quite readily for the serpent of wide repute.

Frank Reade, Jr., was silent. He watched the creature closely.

Its leviathan form certainly made of it a dangerous adversary. It seemed as if its very weight would crush the boat.

The serpent regarded the boat apparently with much wonder, and it seemed in the light of another monster of the deep, and therefore a deadly foe.

Its actions seemed to indicate this. It reared its mighty head aloft and opened its wide jaws.

"Look out!" cried Cooledge, "it is going to strike us!"

This was the truth.

The monster's head shot forward and struck the *Canoe* a terrific blow amidships. For a moment it seemed as if the light craft must fall to pieces.

While the serpent appeared unharmed and drew back for another blow, every one of the voyagers had been prostrated by the shock.

"Hold on!" cried Frank, "that will never do. We must stop that."

The young inventor rushed into the pilot-house.

He instantly donned his diving helmet. Barney followed his example.

"Mercy on us!" cried Cooledge. "You are not going out to attack that monster, Frank?"

"Yes, I am!" replied the young inventor.

"But — he will eat you up at one gulp!"

"I think not," said Frank, resolutely. He picked up a coil of wire and connected one end with the dynamos.

Then he put the coil of wire through a valve and out on to the deck. He then went forward to the vestibule. Barney followed him.

At this moment the serpent once more struck the boat. The shock was most terrific.

"We cannot stand many more of those," declared Cooledge. "We pray for your success, Frank."

The young inventor and Barney were the next moment on deck. They were on the opposite side of the boat and were not seen by the serpent.

Frank made his way along to the pilot-house, where he picked up the

coil of wire which was connected as we have seen with the dynamos.

Pomp in the pilot house had been instructed by Frank when to turn on the current, and stood ready to do it at the proper signal.

Frank crept along the edge of the pilot house until he reached the dome of the water tank amidships, which was the serpent's target.

And here he twisted the wire to a knob in the steel surface, making the circuit at the same time. The serpent was preparing for another blow.

Frank ran back to the pilot house and gave the signal to Pomp, who turned on the full power of the dynamos, and thus charged the steel dome to a mighty extent.

The next moment the serpent struck the dome.

Barney and Frank clung to the forward rail and watched the result. It was thrilling enough.

The serpent struck the steel wall of the tank and of course got the full force of the electric charge.

Up into the water its flat head reared, and its mighty coils were drawn up with a fearful convulsion. Then down sank the cruel looking head until it lay upon the sands. The huge coils were twisting violently.

Then Frank grasped Barney's arm. Placing his helmet close to the Celt's, he shouted:

"Now is our time; follow me!"

Frank saw that the serpent was not dead but stunned by the electric shock. The twisting convulsions of its body might strike the boat and do it harm.

So Frank seized his keen axe from his belt, and descended to the bed of the ocean.

Barney followed him. In a few moments they had reached the spot. Up went their axes and came down upon the monster's neck.

In a few moments they cut the head from the body. The sea serpent's career was ended.

It could never do more harm to the submarine boat or aught else. The long gigantic body continued to spasmodically twist and turn. ^{It was a} daring and successful feat.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GALLEON'S TREASURE.

THOSE in the cabin who had watched the whole affair were constrained to give way to cheers.

"Golly! dey kain't whip Marse Frank, an' yo' kin bet on dat!" cried Pomp, with enthusiasm; "he jes' find a way to git de best ob dem ebery time!"

"On my word I believe you, Pomp," declared Cooledge; "he is certainly a wonderful man!"

"Kain't beat him fo' suah."

In a few moments Frank and Barney were back again safe and sound in the cabin.

Cooledge gripped the young inventor's hand, and cried:

"That beat anything that I ever saw or heard of in my life! If you asked me for a plan for getting rid of that monster I could not have given you one!"

"Pshaw!" said Frank, modestly, "it was simple enough!"

The incidents of the past few hours had been exciting enough for the most fastidious, as all were bound to admit.

None had for some while partaken of food and the inner man now asserting himself, Pomp hastened to the galley and got up an appetising meal.

All felt better after this, and a general discussion upon the outlook was indulged in.

"Do you think you can locate the second obstruction to the tank valve, Frank?" asked Cooledge.

"I hope so!"

"Will you try it right away?"

"Yes."

"If you succeed I suppose we shall have no trouble in going ahead once more all right?"

"Certainly!"

The possibility of locating the trouble and its nature were discussed. Then Frank arose, and said:

"Come, Barney, let us go down under the tank once more. I suspect the trouble is in the pneumatic valve which will not work."

"I'm wid yez, sor!"

Down below therefore they went once more.

This time Frank was determined not to come up until he had located the trouble. He crawled under the tank and began work.

The supporting bar and rivet which he had replaced were yet in position. But Frank saw through a glass window that the valve was still open and the pneumatic tube did not work.

For fully an hour the young inventor studied the situation. Then he found the source of the trouble.

Between the two flanges of the valve there was an object. It was pressed so tightly in there that the valve was absolutely wedged and most immovable.

What the object was and how it came there remained to be learned. The question now was how to remove it.

Frank crept up and bore his weight upon one of the flanges. It would not move. Then he tried the other.

It moved a trifle and the object which formed the obstruction slid down a peg. Frank reached up and tried to grasp it.

But it eluded his grasp. He turned and motioned to Barney.

"Come here," he said; "I want your help."

"All roight, sor."

"Help me to bear down on this flange," said Frank. "I want all your strength, Barney."

"Ye'll have it, sor."

Together now they bore down upon the valve flange. There was a grating sound, and then the object fell down with a thud. The flange flew up and threw Frank and Barney right and left.

But the point was gained. The valve was closed, and the boat was once more in working order.

Frank picked up the object which had caused all the mischief. It was a semi-circular block of wood, such as might have come from the masthead of a ship.

It had doubtless been drawn into the tank while the boat was sinking, and had lodged in the valve. When the iron bar had fallen and opened the valve, the block of wood had followed the

flanges, and caught there. It was easy enough to see now.

"But we're all right, now," cried Frank, joyfully; "come on, Barney, let's go back to the surface."

Cooledge and the others had been anxiously awaiting the result in the pilot-house.

As Frank and Barney now appeared they read the good news in their faces.

They could not help a cheer.

"Yes," declared Frank, "it is true. The boat is in good working order once more."

"Thank Heaven!" cried Cooledge, fervently, "then we are not to perish one thousand fathoms deep in the sea."

Frank rushed to the keyboard and closed the tank lever.

Instantly the pneumatic tubes began to work, and expelled the water from the tank. The *Canoe* shot upwards to the surface.

Up into the air the boat sprung. But all was darkness upon the sea. It was near the hour of midnight.

The search light was brought into play, however, and showed about a mile to windward the point of land which marked the entrance to the Sea of Gold.

Beyond that was the open sea. Frank decided to at once make for it.

"There is no sleep for me to-night," he declared. "I will hold the helm while the rest of you sleep. We can be fifty miles from here before morning."

And so it was decided. The tired voyagers were glad enough to close their eyes in slumber.

Frank held the *Canoe* on its southern course until daylight.

The Sea of Gold was now left far behind. As far as it was concerned, the object of the enterprise was gained and the project at an end.

The Sea of Gold had proved a delusion and a snare. But all looked forward to a new project.

Southward for two weeks the submarine boat held its way. This brought the voyagers to the verge of Oceania and down to the Tropic of Cancer.

They were now in the midst of the coral isles of the Pacific. Every day they were sighted at all points of the compass.

But Frank did not offer to make a stop at any of these. He kept on until far south of Honolulu. Neither did he stop here as he had intended.

"I want to get into those waters once travelled so extensively by the old Spanish galleons," he declared. "They seldom travelled north of the Equator, and almost always on a line with Peru."

"Ye're right, skipper," cried old Jack Kane, "that's jest the size of it. Look fer 'em on that line, anywhere from the Navigator Isles eastward."

So the *Canoe* kept on among the various archipelagoes until well on to the equatorial line. Then Frank made a course eastward.

He sailed on until land was sighted, and a reference to the charts showed it to be the Marquesas Isles.

From there to the coast of Peru it was open water.

"Here," said Frank, "is our point of beginning. This is the track of most of that trading company of Spanish navigators. From here to the coast of Peru we will sail under water."

Down sank the *Canoe* by Frank's order. They were not yet out of sight of the Islands of Marquesas.

The water was of great depth, but the submarine boat was built to stand any pressure, so she went down until the bottom came into view.

Then Cooledge gave a great start and a shout.

"Frank," he cried, "what a fate! There is a sunken galleon now!"

Frank sprang to the window.

"You don't say!" he exclaimed, in keen surprise. "On my word I believe you are right!"

There were certainly the outlines of a sunken vessel.

It was covered with a great growth of seaweed, and partly buried in the sand.

Its rotting timbers had fallen in, and left great gaping holes in the ancient hull.

That it was really an old time galleon, could be seen by its shape and crumbling proportions. What a strange chance that the voyagers should have happened right upon it at first.

The submarine boat was allowed to

rest upon the bottom of the sea. The galleon was distant not twenty yards.

"Get ready for exploration!" cried Frank. "Bring out the diving suits! Will you go with us, Mr. Cooledge?"

"You may bet that I will!" cried the reporter; "that is, if you will permit me to."

"Why, certainly."

Frank and Barney and Cooledge were selected as the party to explore the galleon. Pomp and Jack Kane were to remain in charge of the *Canoe*.

They were speedily equipped, and left the cabin of the submarine boat. It was a new experience for Cooledge, and his head buzzed a trifle.

But he quickly recovered and followed Frank and Barney. They had soon reached the ancient hulk.

It was easy to see that this galleon had once been a proud sight upon the seas. But a storm, or perhaps the solid shot of some English privateer, had sent her to the bottom.

Up a bank of sand the explorers walked to a gaping aperture in her side. Each wore a bright electric globe on his helmet.

So it was easy to see objects in the dark interior of the wrecked vessel. But in venturing into the sunken ship's hold it was necessary to proceed carefully lest the rattling planks might let them down.

Little was left of the cargo of the fated ship. Time and the elements of the deep sea had eradicated much.

A few crumbling remains of casks and boxes littered the hold. No sign of human bones was left, though undoubtedly the crew went down with the ship.

Nigh two hundred years in those dark sea depths had left but the shell of the old vessel. But our voyagers went on with their tour of discovery.

They passed through the hold and found some rotting stairs leading up into the cabin. With the exercise of due care they made their way up these.

The cabin of the galleon presented a dreary sight.

The beautiful furnishings which it must once have had were all crumbled to dust and ruin long ago. The remains

of a table and chairs lay in a mouldering heap.

Some metallic articles among these were picked up and recognised at once as vessels of silver. These were preserved as of value.

From the cabin they went to the berth deck, and thence to the magazine. A heap of black stuff there might once have been powder.

The voyagers pushed on into another small chamber. This had an iron door, which was now crumbling from its hinges.

"The treasure chamber," Frank muttered. Barney pushed the iron door aside, and Frank and Cooledge followed him.

Here were a number of small iron chests. They were rusty, and crumbled at the touch. As the rusted iron fell aside there dropped into view heaps of round objects, flat upon the surface. They were black and hideous, but a swift investigation showed that they were gold.

CHAPTER XII.

WHICH IS THE END.

THE action of sea water has no effect upon gold. It retains its character indefinitely, while other metals fall to dust.

The heaps of gold coins in the crumbling iron chests consisted of ducats and doubloons and other foreign coins, and represented a literal fortune.

To express the sensations of the reporter Cooledge in words would be flatly impossible. He was beside himself with joy.

He dipped his hands into the heap of coins and turned them over. His joy was of a delirious kind.

Frank and Barney were matter-of-fact. It was not the first experience of the kind for them.

Frank bent down, and shouted:

"Are you satisfied?"

"More than satisfied," cried the delighted scribe. "Why, it is an immense treasure—enough to enrich us all."

"The question now is how to get it aboard the *Canoe*," said Frank. "We

will have to go back for some sort of a receptacle."

"Do you go back and I will remain here," shouted the reporter; "I will break open all these chests!"

"All right," agreed Frank.

So he and Barney went back to the *Canoe*. In a few moments they were in the cabin.

Old Jack Kane now insisted upon also returning with them, so a diving suit was procured for him. Bags were taken for the carrying of the gold.

When the three divers reached the hold of the galleon Cooledge had all the chests opened and the gold lay in a huge heap on the rotten planks.

It was gathered up and placed in the bags. Then it was carried safely to the submarine boat.

The treasure hunt had been a success. This atoned richly for the failure they had made in the Sea of Gold.

Once more in the cabin of the *Canoe*, and with all the galleon's treasure safely recovered, Cooledge and Kane were frantic with delight.

"I reckon this is my last v'yage," cried old Jack. "I'll tie up to the dock now and go into ordinary. I've had enough of the sea."

"By Jove, I can now buy up the *Squagtown Advertiser* and be my own editor," cried Cooledge, "that will suit me! Hooray! We're rich—rich!"

Barney turned a handspring and Pomp cut a double shuffle. Frank even whistled a jolly tune.

"Well," he cried, finally, "what shall the word be, boys?"

"Homeward bound!" cried Cooledge.

"Have you all had enough of the deep sea?"

"Aye, aye, sir," cried Kane.

"You bet," shouted Cooledge.

Barney and Pomp nodded vigorously. Frank laughed, and said:

"Well, homeward bound it is. Here goes for Readestown, U.S.A."

He pressed the tank lever and the boat shot up to the surface. Due east Frank set the course.

The voyagers in the highest of spirits all came out on deck and indulged in gay conversation.

Cooledge and old Jack were never

tired of telling of their plans for the future.

And so the days sped by, and the submarine boat made a rapid run for the coast of Peru.

Frank had thought of making the port of Callao, but finding that he was nearer Valparaiso, Chili, he changed his course.

The run to Valparaiso was a quick and smooth one. Frank's reason for putting in here was that they were sadly in need of supplies.

As the submarine boat appeared in the harbour she attracted much attention. Many believed her a dynamite cruiser sent thither by Uncle Sam.

As it chanced relations between Chili and the United States were somewhat strained at the time. Frank and Cooledge went ashore and called upon the United States Consul.

It was while they were absent thus that a very peculiar thing happened to those left aboard the *Canoe*.

Barney was on deck chatting with old Jack, when a little steam launch with a number of officers on board came dashing up.

She carried a small brass cannon and her crew was armed. This fact gave Barney and old Jack a bit of surprise.

"Great whales!" ejaculated the old salt. "What is the meaning of that? They're after us!"

"Begorra, I believe yez are roight," declared Barney in surprise. "I wish Misther Frank was here now."

"Ahoy!" came a hail in Spanish from the launch. "What craft is that?"

It chanced that old Jack knew the Gringo language well. So he replied:

"The submarine boat, *Deep Sea Canoe*, of the U.S. of America. What's your business with us?"

"We are coming aboard," was the tart reply. "You will lower your gangway. We must inspect you."

"Shiver my timbers!" roared the old salt. "Our skipper is ashore. Do you think we are filibusters?"

"We have no time for explanations," was the rough reply; "throw out your gang ladder, or we'll fire upon you!"

"You are a set of impudent dogs!"

roared old Jack. "You've no right to board this vessel."

"Throw out your gangway," was the relentless reply, "or you will take the consequences."

Old Jack turned to Barney.

"By my figger head!" he growled. "I hate to knuckle to them Gringos. But they'll no doubt make trouble for us. What do ye say?"

"Be jabbers, I'll go down an' hide the bags of gold," declared Barney. "Yez had bettther put out the ladder, an' I'll be back directly."

"That's the right reckoning, mate. I'll hold the deck till ye come back. Now ye white livered Spanish dogs, ye come aboard of this craft only to answer to the U.S. Government for it."

A scornful laugh was the reply.

Then the launch lowered a boat. Into it stepped an officer and file of armed Chilean marines.

In a moment they were clambering upon the deck of the *Canoe*. Barney and Pomp came puffing out of the cabin. They had hidden the gold.

Old Jack was holding the deck and arguing with Lieutenant Alvarez, as the Chilean gave his name. Jack explained the nature of the *Canoe* and its mission here, but the Chilean officer looked incredulous.

He apparently fancied that the submarine boat was some deadly war vessel sent by Uncle Sam to blow up the harbour of Valparaiso. Impressed with the idea that he had made an important capture the lieutenant was exceedingly officious.

But when after searching the boat he found no munitions of war he was crest-fallen, and inclined to fear that he had made a mistake!

But he decided to hold the *Canoe* until the captain or rather Frank Reade, Jr., should return. The swarthy lieutenant clanked his ponderous sword and showed his white teeth.

"The U.S. have no very kindly feeling towards us just now," he said. "We must take no chances. The Yankees are very tricky."

"Do yez think so?" cried Barney, nudging Jack. "Well yez ought to see the Oirish."

Then he and old Jack laughed uproariously. This angered Alvarez, but what could he do?

At this moment, however, the boat of the *Canoe* was seen coming over the waters of the bay. There was another man in it besides Frank and Cooledge.

They were quickly alongside and sprang on deck.

That they were astonished at the state of affairs they beheld goes without saying.

"Barney!" exclaimed Frank, "what does this mean?"

"Shure, sor, ye'll have to ax that black whiskered ape at the gangway, sor,—him wid the big sword."

"He has run in on us and boarded us without a good cause!" cried old Jack, indignantly. "If I only had a dozen good lads of the old navy with cutlasses we'd mighty quick give them the run."

"Bad cess to them!" put in Barney.

"What does this mean, sir?" said Frank, sternly, as he faced the Chilean officer.

"Are you the captain of this craft?" asked the lieutenant, pompously.

"I am her owner," replied Frank.

"Then I hold you under arrest on suspicion of plotting against the Chilean Government."

Frank's eyes flashed.

"I'll trouble you to leave the deck of my vessel," he said. "Your suspicions are such as could come from none but an unmitigated ass! You are *persona non grata*! Go!"

The Chilean officer showed his teeth, but the man who had been with Frank and Cooledge, now came forward and said:

"I am the U.S. Consul. My word establishes the character of this vessel. This is enough for you to know!"

The Chilean officer hesitated. This angered the Consul, and he pointed to a distant warship.

"There is the United States ship *Yorktown*," he said, "and Fighting Bob Evans is in command! You know him well. If I am compelled to call upon him, it will be a sorry mess for you!"

The hint was enough.

The Gringo lieutenant backed down the gangway with a scowl. He was

soon on board his launch, which steamed away.

"The impudence of the wretches!" cried the Consul, angrily; "I wish almost that the U.S. would give these fellows a lesson. They deserve it!"

Frank showed the Consul over the *Deep Sea Canoe* and entertained him at dinner. The next day the *Canoe* weighed anchor, and having taken her supplies aboard sailed out of the harbour.

She was now really homeward bound.

We need not detail the incidents of that voyage home. Suffice it to say that nothing of an exciting sort occurred.

All was propitious, and the *Deep Sea Canoe* entered the river and one morning lay at anchor before Readestown.

To depict the excitement created by the return of the submarine voyagers would be difficult

The whole town turned out *en masse*. The news spread rapidly over the country.

Coolidge, the reporter, was perhaps the happiest man in the universe. He had returned with a fortune.

The *Deep Sea Canoe* had, however, suffered much from the long trip. Indeed, Frank declared that she would hardly be able to go another cruise.

"It is too bad!" declared Coolidge with regret. "You will miss her, Frank. What will you do?"

"Pshaw!" said the young inventor, with a light laugh. "I'll build one to beat her."

Barney and Pomp were indeed overjoyed to get back to Readestown.

Old Jack Kane declared his intention of making his home in the smart little city.

"I've had enough of the sea," he declared. "I'm nothing but an old hulk, and it's time I put in for life."

Coolidge could not find words to express his gratitude to Frank.

"You may rest assured," he said, "I shall never forget it. You have made a man of me."

Coolidge went back to New York in a few days. He quickly turned his gold into good government notes. His next move was to buy the *Squagtown Advertiser*.

Six months later Frank received his wedding cards. He had entered upon life in good earnest.

Frank Reade, Jr., and Barney and Pomp are just now in Readestown. It is said that the young inventor is at work on a new invention.

What this is we may some day be able to tell. Frank is inclined to be reticent in such matters.

We have carried the reader across the great Pacific to the wonderful but delusive Sea of Gold, and through the depths of the sea. We have depicted the thrilling adventures of the crew of the *Deep Sea Canoe*, and brought them safely home.

This ends, therefore, all matter of interest in our tale, so we will until some future day wish the indulgent reader a kind adieu.

DROWNED NEAR HIS OWN DOOR.

"*Why, that's Tom, my husband!*" cried the poor woman: "I was expecting his ship to come in almost any day. He'd been gone a year on a voyage to South America, and now here he lies dead on the sand. Oh, God! what shall we do—what shall we do?"

The ship had foundered during a tremendous gale off the South Coast in the winter of 1879, and the body of this sailor (by the irony of fate) had been cast ashore *within* half a mile of his own cottage. Such an incident is dramatic; it appeals to the imagination and excites pity. But are there not thousands——? What's the use of any more preamble? Read this:

"In the spring of 1884"—so runs a woman's letter—"my health began to slip away from me, as a dream does when one awakes. The first sign of what was happening was a feeling of languor and fatigue that I could not account for. My mind was full of small worries, and things that I commonly took no notice of assumed an importance which did not, I knew, properly belong to them.

"My appetite was bad, and what little I ate gave me an intense pain at the chest, which seemed to go through to the back between the shoulder-blades. Not unfrequently the pain in my stomach was so keen, and held out so long, as to double my body up as one folds a napkin. Following this, there would come a sense of sinking as if the very ground were failing beneath me.

"Being unable to digest nourishing food, my strength vanished day by day, until I had barely power to walk feebly about. All ambition to work was gone from me. With the least exertion I would lose my breath, and my heart would throb and palpitate so that I was alarmed lest some one of these attacks might be fatal. Often I would sit for an hour or more, powerless to move hand or foot.

"During all this time I was troubled with other distressful symptoms, which I will only allude to in few words. There was a belching of wind or gas from the stomach, foul and disgusting, which sickened me dreadfully; an aching head, sallow skin, a feeling of chilliness even on slight exposure, sleeplessness, mental anxiety, and increasing exhaustion.

"I was treated by a doctor, and used many medicines suggested by others—all to no purpose. The disease seemed to be seated beyond the power of human skill to uproot it. I speak now of a time four years after I was first attacked. While in this wretched and apparently hopeless condition, I read of what Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup had done in like cases. I procured this medicine from Mr. Gee, the chemist at Whitehaven. After taking it for a week I felt marked relief, and when I had used three bottles I could eat any kind of food; my strength gradually returned, and in a short time I was well and strong as ever. This may sound almost incredible to some, but it is the simple truth."

The above letter is from a lady residing at Distington, near Whitehaven, Cumberland. For personal reasons she requests us not to publish her name at present, yet her illness and cure, as stated, are known to all in her neighbourhood. We append a note which explains itself:

"I can vouch for the accuracy of the above statement. I have known the lady for the past five years.—(Signed), Charles Clarke, Postmaster, Distington, October 10th, 1894."

For one moment now let us consider two or three important facts. This lady suffered for four years. Read her letter again, and see what this fact means. Pain, loss, and sorrow filled that dreary period. Yet she was finally cured in as many weeks. Had she known of Seigel's Syrup and used it at the outset, she would have been cured at once. Not a day, not an hour, of all those four years but the Syrup would have set her on the road to health, had she used it to drive out her disease—indigestion and dyspepsia. Still, she suffered, and faced death, with help right at her elbow. *Alas! she knew it not.*

Now do you see why so many of us are like poor Tom, who was drowned at his own door?

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